

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An audio signal encoding apparatus comprising:
 - means for adding a first audio signal and a second audio signal
5 into an addition-result signal;
 - means for subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal;
 - means responsive to the addition-result signal for generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-
10 result signal;
 - means responsive to the subtraction-result signal for generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal;
 - a plurality of first predictors having different prediction
15 characteristics respectively and being responsive to the first difference signal for generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively;
 - a plurality of first subtracters for generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference
20 signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively;
 - means for selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals;
 - a plurality of second predictors having different prediction
25 characteristics respectively and being responsive to the second difference signal for generating second different prediction signals

for the second difference signal, respectively;

a plurality of second subtracters for generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction
5 signals, respectively; and

means for selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals.

10 2. An audio signal encoding apparatus as recited in claim 1, further comprising means for generating a variable-rate bit stream in response to the first minimum prediction-error signal and the second minimum prediction-error signal.

15 3. An audio signal decoding apparatus for processing a first minimum prediction-error signal and a second minimum prediction-error signal which are generated by an audio signal encoding apparatus comprising means for adding a first audio signal and a second audio signal into an addition-result signal; means for
20 subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal; means responsive to the addition-result signal for generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal; means responsive to the subtraction-result signal for generating a second
25 difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal; a plurality of first predictors having different prediction

characteristics respectively and being responsive to the first difference signal for generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively; a plurality of first subtracters for generating first prediction-error signals

5 representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively; means for selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals; a plurality of second predictors having different prediction characteristics

10 respectively and being responsive to the second difference signal for generating second different prediction signals for the second difference signal, respectively; a plurality of second subtracters for generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different

15 prediction signals, respectively; and means for selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals; the audio signal decoding apparatus comprising:

means for recovering the addition-result signal from the first

20 minimum prediction-error signal;

means for recovering the subtraction-result signal from the second minimum prediction-error signal; and

means for recovering the first audio signal and the second audio signal from the recovered addition-result signal and the

25 recovered subtraction-result signal.

4. A method comprising the steps of:
 - adding a first audio signal and a second audio signal into an addition-result signal;
 - subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal,
 - 5 and generating a subtraction-result signal;
 - generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal;
 - generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal;
 - 10 generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively;
 - generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively;
 - 15 selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals;
 - generating second different prediction signals for the second difference signal, respectively;
 - 20 generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively;
 - selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second
 - 25 prediction-error signals; and
 - transmitting the first minimum prediction-error signal and

the second minimum prediction-error signal to a communication line.

5. An optical recording medium storing formatted information of
5 a first minimum prediction-error signal and a second minimum
prediction-error signal which are generated by an audio signal
encoding apparatus comprising means for adding a first audio signal
and a second audio signal into an addition-result signal; means for
subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and
10 generating a subtraction-result signal; means responsive to the
addition-result signal for generating a first difference signal
representing a difference in the addition-result signal; means
responsive to the subtraction-result signal for generating a second
difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result
15 signal; a plurality of first predictors having different prediction
characteristics respectively and being responsive to the first
difference signal for generating first different prediction signals for
the first difference signal, respectively; a plurality of first
subtracters for generating first prediction-error signals
20 representing differences between the first difference signal and the
first different prediction signals, respectively; means for selecting a
first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest
difference from among the first prediction-error signals; a plurality
of second predictors having different prediction characteristics
25 respectively and being responsive to the second difference signal for
generating second different prediction signals for the second

difference signal, respectively; a plurality of second subtracters for generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively; and means for selecting a second
5 minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals.

6. A method of network-based transmission, comprising the steps of:

- 10 adding a first audio signal and a second audio signal into an addition-result signal;
subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal;
generating a first difference signal representing a difference
15 in the addition-result signal;
generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal;
generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively;
20 generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively;
selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first
25 prediction-error signals;
generating second different prediction signals for the second

difference signal, respectively;

generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively;

5 selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals; and

transmitting the first minimum prediction-error signal and the second minimum prediction-error signal to a communication
10 line.

7. An audio signal encoding apparatus comprising:

means for selecting a first audio signal and a second audio signal from among signals composing a multi-channel audio signal;

15 means for adding the first audio signal and the second audio signal into an addition-result signal;

means for subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal;

means responsive to the addition-result signal for generating a
20 first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal;

means responsive to the subtraction-result signal for generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal;

25 a plurality of first predictors having different prediction characteristics respectively and being responsive to the first

difference signal for generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively;

a plurality of first subtracters for generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference
5 signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively;

means for selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals;

a plurality of second predictors having different prediction
10 characteristics respectively and being responsive to the second difference signal for generating second different prediction signals for the second difference signal, respectively;

a plurality of second subtracters for generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the
15 second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively; and

means for selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals.

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8. An audio signal encoding apparatus as recited in claim 7, further comprising means for generating a variable-rate bit stream in response to the first minimum prediction-error signal and the second minimum prediction-error signal.

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9. An audio signal decoding apparatus for processing a first

minimum prediction-error signal and a second minimum prediction-error signal which are generated by an audio signal encoding apparatus comprising means for selecting a first audio signal and a second audio signal from among signals composing a multi-channel audio signal; means for adding the first audio signal and the second audio signal into an addition-result signal; means for subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal; means responsive to the addition-result signal for generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal; means responsive to the subtraction-result signal for generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal; a plurality of first predictors having different prediction characteristics respectively and being responsive to the first difference signal for generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively; a plurality of first subtracters for generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively; means for selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals; a plurality of second predictors having different prediction characteristics respectively and being responsive to the second difference signal for generating second different prediction signals for the second difference signal, respectively; a plurality of second subtracters for generating second prediction-error signals representing differences

between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively; and means for selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals; the
5 audio signal decoding apparatus comprising:

means for recovering the addition-result signal from the first minimum prediction-error signal;

means for recovering the subtraction-result signal from the second minimum prediction-error signal; and

10 means for recovering the first audio signal and the second audio signal from the recovered addition-result signal and the recovered subtraction-result signal.

10. A method comprising the steps of:

15 selecting a first audio signal and a second audio signal from among signals composing a multi-channel audio signal;

adding the first audio signal and the second audio signal into an addition-result signal;

20 subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal;

generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal;

generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal;

25 generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively;

generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively;

5 selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals;

generating second different prediction signals for the second difference signal, respectively;

10 generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively;

selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals; and

15 transmitting the first minimum prediction-error signal and the second minimum prediction-error signal to a communication line.

11. An optical recording medium storing formatted information of
20 a first minimum prediction-error signal and a second minimum prediction-error signal which are generated by an audio signal encoding apparatus comprising means for selecting a first audio signal and a second audio signal from among signals composing a multi-channel audio signal; means for adding the first audio signal
25 and the second audio signal into an addition-result signal; means for subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and

generating a subtraction-result signal; means responsive to the addition-result signal for generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal; means responsive to the subtraction-result signal for generating a second difference signal representing a difference in the subtraction-result signal; a plurality of first predictors having different prediction characteristics respectively and being responsive to the first difference signal for generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively; a plurality of first subtracters for generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different prediction signals, respectively; means for selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals; a plurality of second predictors having different prediction characteristics respectively and being responsive to the second difference signal for generating second different prediction signals for the second difference signal, respectively; a plurality of second subtracters for generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively; and means for selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals.

12. A method of network-based transmission, comprising the steps of:

selecting a first audio signal and a second audio signal from among signals composing a multi-channel audio signal;

adding the first audio signal and the second audio signal into an addition-result signal;

5 subtracting the first audio signal from the second audio signal, and generating a subtraction-result signal;

generating a first difference signal representing a difference in the addition-result signal;

generating a second difference signal representing a
10 difference in the subtraction-result signal;

generating first different prediction signals for the first difference signal, respectively;

generating first prediction-error signals representing differences between the first difference signal and the first different
15 prediction signals, respectively;

selecting a first minimum prediction-error signal representative of a smallest difference from among the first prediction-error signals;

generating second different prediction signals for the second
20 difference signal, respectively;

generating second prediction-error signals representing differences between the second difference signal and the second different prediction signals, respectively;

selecting a second minimum prediction-error signal
25 representative of a smallest difference from among the second prediction-error signals; and

transmitting the first minimum prediction-error signal and the second minimum prediction-error signal to a communication line.